POS 3931 Political Psychology

Instructor: Dr. Christopher Olds
Meeting Time: Online asynchronous
Credit: 3 units, letter grade (including +/- modifiers)
Classroom: Canvas online learning management system
Office Hours: Mon and Tues 1:30-4:30 p.m. and via appointment
Office: SOC 390
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Specific Goals of the Course

Political psychologist Howard Lavine, in the first line of his 2002 book chapter on models of political evaluation, says the following: "[p]olitical psychology, as an interdisciplinary pursuit, applies psychological concepts and methods to test theories about elite and mass political behavior" (225). This provides a sound working definition of the key subject matter of the class. The intention of the course is to provide a broad, general overview of research in the area of political psychology. Political psychology is focused on the influence of human thought and emotion on political opinion and political behavior. Research in political psychology spans multiple major fields of the political science discipline, with work focused on American politics, comparative politics, and international relations. We will engage with much of this literature in the class. It will be useful over the course of the semester to see how psychological and political processes interact to shape outcomes in both domestic and global contexts. In particular, students should consistently evaluate how the way in which individuals and/or groups think and feel about politics can determine how individuals and groups interact with political institutions and choose policies.

Useful skills that will serve you well in the future will be developed:

• the ability to think critically about differing viewpoints by evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of evidence

• the ability to communicate your ideas in a clear way in audiovisual and written formats

• the ability to perform extended research of multiple sources to concisely summarize what is currently known about a topic

Course Objectives

As the instructor of this course, I expect that my students at the end of the course will:

1. Be able to analyze the theories and research designs employed in political psychology research with substantive critiques of the scholarship.

2. Be able to interpret how social cognition, social relations, and social influences can influence political attitudes and behavior.

3. Be able to assess the role of personality in political decision-making.

4. Be able to determine the psychological qualities that help to shape the voting behavior of citizens.

5. Be able to understand the influence of psychology in race and ethnic relations (e.g. the mechanics of stereotypes).

6. Be able to evaluate the role of psychology in how people process news media coverage and advertisements, as well how psychological principles shape the communications strategies of the news media, interest groups, and politicians.

7. Be able to determine the way political psychology factors into extreme acts or behaviors, such as terrorism, rioting, and engaging in armed conflicts and wars.

8. Be able to review, analyze, and connect preexisting research in a useful and coherent way.

9. Be able to express arguments rooted in substantive evidence.

10. Be able to respectfully and intelligently critique arguments made by others.

11. Be able to develop concise essays that are thorough, focused, and informative for readers.

12. Be able to use technology to visually and verbally communicate your ideas to others with precision and clarity.

USF Statement on Academic Accommodations for a Disability

Students in need of academic accommodations for a disability may consult with the Office of Students with Disabilities Services (SDS) to arrange appropriate accommodations. Students are required to give reasonable notice prior to requesting an accommodation.

Note: The Americans with Disabilities Act is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact USF Student Disability Services as soon as possible.

Academic Honesty

◇ Any handouts used in this course are copyrighted. Handouts means all materials generated for this class, which include, but are not limited to: syllabi, notes, lecture slides, essay prompts, and review sheets. This includes all materials that are posted on the web. Because these materials are copyrighted, you do not have the right to copy the handouts unless the instructor expressly grants permission. In other words, do not post or distribute any content from this course on any website, or other potential venue.
◇ Lecture notes may not be sold.
◇ No form of academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, etc.) will be tolerated. As commonly defined, plagiarism consists of passing off as one's own the ideas, words, writings, etc., which belong to another. In accordance with this definition, you are committing plagiarism if you copy the work of another person and turn it in as your own, even if you have permission of that person. This includes copying material from books, reports, journals, pamphlets, handouts, other publications, web sites, etc., without giving appropriate credit for those ideas and/or without identifying material as quotations when taken directly from another source.
◇ Students should complete USF's on-line plagiarism tutorial, which may be found at:
http://davon.etg.usf.edu/share/plagiarism/
◇ Violation of these rules, even if you unintentionally violate them, can result in disciplinary action including a grade penalty (an FF in the course), suspension, dismissal, and expulsion from USF. If you have any questions regarding plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty, please consult the relevant sections of the USF student catalogs, and/or ask me for further explanation.

USF Statement on Emergencies

In the event of an emergency, it may be necessary for USF to suspend normal operations. During this time, USF may opt to continue delivery of instruction through methods that include but are not limited to: Canvas, email messaging and/or an alternate schedule. It is the responsibility of the student to monitor the Canvas site for each class for course specific communication, as well as the main USF website, emails, and MoBull messages for important general information.

Note: Examples of an emergency could be a hurricane, tornado, institution-wide power outage, etc.

Course Format

The course is focused heavily on student participation. Active learning is a major emphasis in my approach to teaching. A major portion of class is devoted to class discussion that will occur in the discussion forum section of the Canvas learning management system. A positive environment is a good learning environment, and is especially important in a course with little face-to-face interaction between students and the instructor. Students must show respect to their peers and the instructor at all times.

Since we will be exchanging ideas and at times touch on controversial political topics through the online forum, you will in all likelihood encounter a statement you disagree with. Regardless, you must never belittle, shout down, insult, or mock another person for their position. Doing so can lead to a person's dismissal from the course. The intention of the course is to learn about how to approach questions of human behavior through the framework of political psychology. Any behavior that hinders the ability of others to learn the materials is not permissible.

Grades

Grades will be based on your performance in four assignments. Students can earn one hundred points in this course. Please note that this is a course where extra credit assignments are not made available. Your grades will reflect your performance on the four assigned tasks only. Please note that weekly participation in the course is essential, as a substantial portion of the grade is devoted to the quality and frequency of enagagement in the discussion forum. Since the course is asynchronous, students are obviously expected to be diligent and exercise effective time management when completing tasks for the class. Every assignment is intended to demonstrate an individual student's mastery of the materials, so you are not allowed to collaborate on assignments or submit an assignment as a group.

Due to the nature of the class, late assignments are not accepted unless a note from an appropriate source confirms a university excused reason for the work needing to be submitted late.

Please note that in the first week of class, there is a syllabus quiz that requires completion, or you will be dropped from the course. No actual score is assigned to the syllabus quiz, so it does not factor into the one hundred point grade calculation.

All assignments are submitted over Canvas. Only submit assignments via email in those rare instances where Canvas is down and inaccessible. Turning in assignments after the due date and saying Canvas was down when you tried to turn it in is not acceptable.

Item #1: Class Discussion Participation (45 points total, 3 points each week of the semester)
Every class week, there is a new discussion thread posing questions about the materials for the week. Students are expected to provide an original response to what is asked, as well as comment on what others have written. Responses need to engage with course materials (lecture notes and readings) in order to receive credit.

You will write a minimum of four comments. One comment will provide a response to the discussion questions, while the other three comments will be a response to the points offered by classmates. Each comment should be substantive, and be written with formal spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Up to three points can be earned each week for this assignment, with the number of points determined by whether each post makes a contribution to the overall discussion, engages with the course materials, and follows the formatting guidelines specified here.

Do not wait until the last minute to submit your contributions to the discussion, as that limits the ability for everyone to converse with each other. The weekly discussion threads will close at Sunday, 11:59 p.m. of every class week.

Item #2: Digital Presentation (20 points)
In this project, students will create a narrated Powerpoint presentation that offers in their own words an analysis of examples of political psychology concepts in contemporary society. The purpose is for you to attempt to draw a connection to the theoretical propositions discussed in the course materials to real life occurrences. In the presentation, you must summarize the theoretical concept or concepts, introduce four examples that you believe demonstrate what is proposed by the theoretical concept or concepts, and explain why you believe they are legitimate examples. Each presentation should be informative and descriptive enough such that someone who has no prior knowledge at all of political psychology can learn from the material provided. The due date for the assignment is posted on the calendar of dates at the end of the syllabus.

All submissions must include your voice discussing the information on each slide. The presentation must include narration throughout the entire presentation. It is not enough to just submit traditional Powerpoint slides. It is also not acceptable to just read the text that is on the slide. You have to elaborate the points expressed on the slide. The text on the slides should not serve as the script of your narration.

Current examples of the political psychology concepts can be taken from newspaper or magazine articles found in the Lexis-Nexis database (which is available through the USF library). A presentation can opt to focus on providing four examples of one concept, such as several examples of the concept of motivated reasoning, or the presentation can elect to discuss four concepts and provide an example of each, or some other combination of concepts and examples. As long as you provide four legitimate examples from contemporary life about political psychology, the number of actual political psychology theoretical concepts you use is up to you.

The scoring of this assignment is based on the following (out of 20 points possible)

• 8 Points: The student presents a thorough and detailed review of a concept or concepts in the political psychology literature, provides four examples of the concept or concepts discussed, and persuasively explains why they are legitimate examples
• 8 Points: The student provides audio narration to the presentation that is understandable and enhances the understanding of the text offered in the slides
• 4 Points: The student provides slides that are visually easy to read and follow. The text avoids frequent spelling and grammatical errors

Item #3: Annotated Bibliography (20 points)
In this assignment, students will offer a summary of at minimum ten sources that all pertain to a topic in the political psychology literature of interest to them. The sources you select must evaluate a research question by collecting and evaluating information relevant to the question. For each source, you must summarize the following components: research question, research theory, research hypothesis, research method, and research findings. For each section, the student must provide a brief summary in their own words. All sources must be academic peer-reviewed sources (academic journal articles, books, and book chapters).

For example, acceptable scholarly research sources include the following academic journals: *American Journal of Political Science*, *Journal of Politics*, *Political Psychology*, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *Journal of Behavioral Decisionmaking*, *Social Science Quarterly*, *Political Behavior*, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, and *Political Research Quarterly*. In terms of books and book chapters, works from university presses (Cambridge University Press, Princeton University Press, Oxford University Press, University of Chicago Press, etc.) are ideal. The following are NOT ALLOWED as scholarly research sources: blogs, websites, newspaper articles, popular novels, mainstream magazine articles, think tank reports, and interest group newsletters. The intention of this assignment is to summarize scholarly research, not to summarize examples written in non-academic outlets.

An example of the style of the annotated bibliography will be posted on Canvas.

Students must type the annotated bibliography in a word-processing computer program and follow specific

formatting rules (12-pt. Times New Roman font, double spaced, and one inch margins on all sides). Microsoft Word .doc files are preferred. Students will be expected to avoid frequent spelling and grammatical errors when writing their annotated bibliography. The student should cite all resources used when constructing these papers using guidelines presented in the American Political Science Association Style Manual. **Every annotated bibliography assignment must be checked for academic integrity by submitting the paper to TurnItIn's plagiarism monitor via Canvas.**

Some potential topics you might opt to select include the following:
-The "Big Five" Personality Traits and Political Behavior
-Ethnocentrism
-Emotion and political participation
-Information processing and voting
-Psychology of terrorism
-Neuroscience and political behavior

The scoring of this assignment is based on the following (out of 20 points possible)

• 7 Points: The student collects at least ten relevant academic sources about a specific topic in the political psychology literature
• 7 Points: The student provides a clear and informative summary in their own words of the five key research components for each source
• 3 Points: The student provides accurate APSA style format citations for each academic source
• 3 Points: The writing is easy to follow and avoids frequent spelling and grammatical errors

Item #4: Analytical Essays (15 points)
For this assignment, students will be presented with prompts that they have several days to complete. The essays are open note and open book, but you cannot collaborate with anyone in completing the responses. All papers must be typed in a word-processing computer program and follow specific formatting rules (12-pt. Times New Roman font, double spaced, and one inch margins on all sides). Microsoft Word .doc files are preferred. Students will be expected to avoid frequent spelling and grammatical errors when writing their papers. The student should cite all resources used when constructing these papers using guidelines presented in the American Political Science Association Style Manual. **Every submission must be checked for academic integrity by submitting the assignment to TurnItIn's plagiarism monitor via Canvas.**

You will have one week to complete the prompts once the assignment is posted on Canvas. Refer to the class calendar at the end of the syllabus for distribution and due dates. Responses must take the form of a traditional essay, with a clear beginning, middle, and end. Each prompt should be answered in separate essays.

Final grades are out of one hundred points possible-

Grade Score
A+= 98.6-100
A = 91.0-98.5
A-= 90.0-90.9
B+= 88.6-89.9
B = 81.0-88.5
B-= 80.0-80.9
C+= 78.6-79.9
C = 71.0-78.5
C-= 70.0-70.9
D+= 68.6-69.9
D = 61.0-68.5
D-= 60.0-60.9

F = 59.9 or less
FF= Academic dishonesty

<u>Grade Appeals:</u> If a student has an issue with the grade they earned for one of the assignments, the student must write a one-page explanation describing what aspect or aspects the evaluation missed. A twenty-four hour cooling off period is required, meaning you cannot submit an appeal within the first twenty-four hours after you receive an assignment grade. The written appeal can only be submitted between the second and third day after you receive an assignment back. Please note that if you submit a grade appeal, the work can potentially be scored lower than the initial grade if the second review of the assignment suggests there are additional issues or problems with the assignment. Appeals should be submitted via e-mail.

Course Materials

There is one text that is required. This book is frequently discounted on online sites like Amazon.com. It can also be rented. All other assigned readings, such as academic journal articles and book chapters, will be posted on Canvas.

Marcus, George E. 2013. *Political Psychology: Neuroscience, Genetics, and Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Reading Schedule

Week One - Introduction to the Class and Getting to Know Each Other
No readings

Week Two - The Importance of Political Psychology and a Brief Methodology Primer for Political Psychologists
• Marcus, George E. 2013. Chapter 1 and Chapter 2. pg. 3-67.

Week Three - A Short History of a Long Tradition: The Evolution of the Field of Political Psychology
• Marcus, George E. 2013. Chapter 3. pg. 68-98.

Week Four - Neuroscience and Political Psychology
• Marcus, George E. 2013. Chapter 4. pg. 99-127.

• Lieberman, Matthew D., Darren Schreiber, and Kevin N. Ochsner. 2003. "Is Political Cognition Like Riding a Bicycle? How Cognitive Neuroscience Can Inform Research on Political Thinking." *Political Psychology* 24: 681-704.

Week Five - Neuroscience and Political Psychology continued
• Theodoridis, Alexander G., and Amy J. Nelson. 2012. "Of BOLD Claims and Excessive Fears: A Call for Caution and Patience Regarding Political Neuroscience." *Political Psychology* 33: 27-43.

• Tingley, Dustin. 2006. "Neurological Imaging as Evidence in Political Science: A Review, Critique, and Guiding Assessment." *Social Science Information* 45: 5-33.

• Phelps, Elizabeth A., and Laura A. Thomas. 2003. "Race, Behavior, and the Brain: The Role of Neuroimaging in Understanding Complex Social Behaviors." *Political Psychology* 24: 747-758.

• Kaplan, Jonas T., Joshua Freedman, and Marco Iacoboni. 2007. "Us Versus Them: Political Attitudes and Party Affiliation Influence Neural Response to Faces of Presidential Candidates." *Neuropsychologia* 45: 55-64.

Week Six - Brain and Conscious Mind (Affective Intelligence Theory)
• Marcus, George E. Chapter 5. Pg. 131-159.

• Marcus, George E., W. Russell Neuman, and Michael MacKuen. 2000. "Dual Affective Subsystems: Disposition and Surveillance" and "Emotion and Political Behavior" in *Affective Intelligence and Political Judgment*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pg. 45-94.

Week Seven - Brain and Conscious Mind continued (Emotion-based Cues)
• Brader, Ted. 2005. "Striking a Responsive Chord: How Political Ads Motivate and Persuade Voters by Appealing to Emotions." *American Journal of Political Science* 49: 388-405.

• Huddy, Leonie, Stanley Feldman, Charles Taber, and Gallya Lahav. 2005. "Threat, Anxiety, and Support of Antiterrorism Policies." *American Journal of Political Science* 49: 593-608.

• Brader, Ted, Nicholas A. Valentino, and Elizabeth Suhay. 2008. "What Triggers Public Opposition to Immigration? Anxiety, Group Cues, and Immigration Threat." *American Journal of Political Science* 52: 959-978.

Week Eight - Political Action: The Uses and Limits of the Mind (Heuristics)
• Marcus, George E. Chapter 6. pg. 160-184.

• Lupia, Arthur. 1994. "Shortcuts versus Encyclopedias: Information and Voting Behavior in California Insurance Reform Elections." *American Political Science Review* 88: 63-76.

• Alexander Todorov, Anesu N. Mandisodza, Amir Goren, and Crystal C. Hall. 2005. "Inferences of Competence from Faces Predict Election Outcomes." *Science* 308: 1623-1626.

• Rahn, Wendy M. 1993. "The Role of Partisan Stereotypes in Information Processing about Political Candidates." *American Journal of Political Science* 37: 472-496.

Week Nine - Personality and Political Psychology
• Marcus, George E. 2013. Chapter 7. pg. 185-221.

Week Ten - Personality and Political Psychology continued
• Mondak, Jeffery J., and Karen D. Halperin. 2008. "A Framework for the Study of Personality and Political Behaviour." *British Journal of Political Science* 38: 335-362.

• Barbaranelli, Claudio, Gian Vittorio Caprara, Michele Vecchione, and Chris R. Fraley. 2007. "Voters Personality Traits in Presidential Elections." *Personality and Individual Differences* 42: 1199-1208.

• Hetherington, Marc, and Elizabeth Suhay. 2011. "Authoritarianism, Threat, and Americans Support for the War on Terror." *American Journal of Political Science* 55: 546-560.

Week Eleven - Political Psychology and Democratic Politics
• Marcus, George E. Chapter 8. pg. 222-256.

• Hermann, Margaret G., and Charles W. Kegley Jr. 1995. "Rethinking Democracy and International Peace: Perspectives from Political Psychology." *International Studies Quarterly* 39: 511-533.

Week Twelve - Psychology of Terrorism
• Victoroff, Jeff. 2005. "The Mind of the Terrorist - A Review and Critique of Psychological Approaches." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49: 3-42.

• Kruglanski, Arie W., Xiaoyan Chen, Mark Dechesne, Shira Fishman, and Edward Orehek. 2009. "Fully Committed: Suicide Bombers' Motivation and the Quest for Personal Significance." *Political Psychology* 30: 331-357.

Week Thirteen - Psychology of Prejudice
• Bobo, Lawrence. 1983. "Whites' Opposition to Busing: Symbolic Racism or Realistic Group Conflict?" *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 45: 1196-1210.

• Huddy, Leonie. 2004. "Contrasting Theoretical Approaches to Intergroup Relations." *Political Psychology* 25: 947-967.

Week Fourteen - Mass Media and Political Psychology
• Mutz, Diana C., and Byron Reeves. 2005. "The New Videomalaise: Effects of Televised Incivility on Political Trust." *American Political Science Review* 99: 1-15.

• Eveland, William P., and Dhavan V. Shah. 2003. "The Impact of Individual and Interpersonal Factors on Perceived News Media Bias." *Political Psychology* 24: 101-117.

Week Fifteen - Social Psychology, Genetics, and Politics
• Marcus, George E. Chapter 9 and Chapter 10. pg. 259-300.

• Smith, Kevin B., Douglas R. Oxley, Matthew V. Hibbing, John R. Alford, and John R. Hibbing. 2011. "Linking Genetics and Political Attitudes: Reconceptualizing Political Ideology." *Political Psychology* 32: 369-397.

• Fowler, James H., Laura A. Baker, and Christopher T. Dawes. 2008. "Genetic Variation in Political Participation." *American Political Science Review* 102: 233-248.

Class Calendar of Important Dates of Graded Assignments

- March 21 Item #2 Due at 11:59 p.m. on Canvas (Digital Presentation)
- April 11 Item #3 Due at 11:59 p.m. on Canvas (Annotated Bibliography)
- April 25 Item #4 Distributed on Canvas (Analytical Essays)
- May 2 Item #4 Due at 11:59 p.m. on Canvas (Analytical Essays)

Syllabus subject to change at instructor's discretion